

Pre-2018 Budget Study Shows People's Hopes And Aspirations

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 9 (Bernama) -- The outcome of the study entitled 'Public Perception Towards the 2018 Budget', to be tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Oct 27, indicates the people are looking forward to effective measures and more benefits to keep up with the rising cost of living.

The nationwide study conducted by KAJIDATA reveals the benefits outlined in the budget will help them tide over the rising cost of living and help the country forge ahead. The benefits are seen as crucial with 37.7 per cent of the respondents saying the assistance provided in the previous budget (2017 Budget) has certainly helped them cope with the cost of living.

Professor Syed Arabi Aidid, KAJIDATA's advisor, said the study noted that the respondents from the B40 segment, those earning below RM3,000, wanted the government to continue looking into their plight in the 2018 Budget.

"The findings note that 90 per cent of the respondents want the government to continue giving emphasis on comprehensive healthcare, employment opportunities, and help senior citizens above 65 and single mothers to sustain themselves.

"They also hope that the people's cash aid scheme BR1M will continue in 2018, with 69.6 per cent of the respondents saying the BR1M announced in the 2017 Budget has achieved its objectives in helping the deserving group," said Syed Arabi, who is also the former rector of the International Islamic University Malaysia.

In their 2018 Budget wish list, they also want to see the government doing more to enhance the quality of education (89.6%), reduce the cost of living (88.8%), improve public transportation (87%), spend more on development and infrastructure (82.4%) and continue to subsidise selected items (80%).

Of the respondents, 84.9 per cent want to see the government providing more affordable houses as they feel the affordable housing provision under the 2017 Budget is inadequate in helping them to own a house.

In the study, the Chinese (65.1%) and Indian respondents (69.7%) want the 2018 Budget to give equal emphasis on the interest of city and rural dwellers.

According to Syed Arabi, the findings showed that despite the better amenities and opportunities in the cities, there were many shortcomings that needed to be addressed.

The study also found that at least 50 per cent of Malaysians are aware that the prime minister will be tabling the 2018 Budget by the end of the month. Almost 70 per cent agree that civil servants deserve a bonus.

The study was conducted to gauge public awareness on the tabling of the 2018 Budget and to evaluate public perception on the measures introduced in the 2017 Budget.

KAJIDATA's computer-aided telephone interview study was carried out from July 26 to Aug 4, 2017 using random stratified sampling with 1,039 respondents from all levels of the society. Established in 2015, KAJIDATA's mission is to effectively acquire and see beyond data and unearth actionable insights.

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